

WE CLAIM:

1. A stitchbonded fabric having a pattern of stitches formed by a multi-needle stitched set stitching threads in a material, characterized in that the material comprises a non-fibrous layer of polymer or metal and at least one set of stitching threads comprises a contractible yarn.

2. A stitchbonded fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the non-fibrous layer is a polymeric film.

3. A stitchbonded fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the non-fibrous layer is a metal foil.

4. A stitchbonded fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the non-fibrous layer consists essentially of a coagulated polymer.

5. A stitchbonded fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the non-fibrous layer consists essentially of a polymeric coating and the coating is supported on a fibrous layer.

6. A stitchbonded fabric in accordance with claim 1 wherein the contractible yarn comprises an elastic filament, a partially oriented synthetic organic polymeric fiber, or a textured yarn.

7. A process for making a stitchbonded fabric wherein the process includes the steps of stitching a pattern of stitches into a planar material with a set of yarns supplied through a least one multi-needle bar of a stitchbonding machine and then subjecting the thusly stitched material to a contraction step, characterized in that the material comprises a non-fibrous layer of polymer or metal and at least one set of stitching threads comprises a contractible yarn.